GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1847
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2016
Smuggling of Stolen Artefacts
Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam;Udasi Shri Shivkumar Chanabasappa

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the fact that a large number of Indian artifacts are being stolen and smuggled from the country and if so, the details of such cases reported during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise;

(b) whether the Government is also aware that some illegal traders are having their own website through which they are selling such artifacts;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to stop the occurrence of smuggling and illegal trading of these artifacts;

(d) whether the Government has appointed any special team of archaeological experts in airports, sea ports and check posts to curb such illegal smuggling; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) Fourteen antiquities have been stolen from centrally protected monuments/museums during last three years. Details are at annexure I. However, as per the information received from CBI there are three cases registered during last three years at Annexure II.

(b) to (c) As per the information received from CBI a preliminary enquiry with allegation of illegal sale of ancient Jain idol through auction on Internet by www.Saffronart.com website was conducted. However, during the enquiry allegation could not be established.

(d) to (e) Yes, Madam. The Archaeological Survey of India has assigned the services of an archaeologist, at each international exit channels to assist the custom authorities to verify antiquities brought for export to curb illegal smuggling of same.

ANNEXURE I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY PART TO (a) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1847 FOR 28.11.2016

Statement giving details of theft of antiquities from Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites/Museums maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India during last three years from 2014 to till date

YEAR 2014

S.No. State Name of Monument/ sites/ District Description of object Date of theft Action Taken Status
1. Karnataka Theft of one Durga Sculpture from the premises of Panchalingeswara Temple, Govindanahalli, K.R.Pete Taluk, Mandya district, Karnataka.
The stone sculpture of eight armed Mahishamardini (Durga). The deity bears trident, sword, chakra, arrow, bell, shield and bow as weapons. She is shown pushing the human form of demon in her lower left hand. The sculpture is made of grey soap stone. 07.03.2014 F.I.R. lodged Not recovered
2. Karnataka Theft of one broken granite Shivalinga from Shiva temple, Thimmalapur, Hospet taluk, Bellary Dist, Karnataka, a centrally protected monument- reg. Broken Stone (granite) Shivalinga
18th-19th .06.2014 F.I.R. lodged Not recovered
3. Gujarat Theft of two wooden carved Brackets from Vitthalbhai Haveli at Vso, Dist. Kheda
Two wooden carved Brackets 23.6.2014 F.I.R. lodged
No look out notice s were issued Recovered back by police authorities
4. Karnataka Theft of one black granite stone Nandi fixed to the Bharateswara subshrine of Ramalingaeswara temple complex Avani, Mulbangal taluk, Kolar district, Karnataka, a Centrally Protected Monument one black granite stone Nandi 18-19.07.2014 F.I.R. lodged
Not recovered.

5. Bihar Theft of one sculpture of Jain Tirthanker (Mahavira)made of stone (granite) from the premises of Jain Shrine Temple Rajgir a centrally protected monument sculpture of Jain Tirthanker (Mahavira) 30-31.07.2014 F.I.R. lodged
Not recovered
6. Karnataka Theft of Two Schist Stone Sculptures from Nageswar temple, Mosale, Hassan taluk, Hassan district Karnataka, centrally protected monument. Two Schist Stone Sculptures of Mahisasuramardini and Sarasawati 13-14.09.2014 F.I.R. Lodged Not recovered

YEAR 2015

S.No. State Name of Monument/ sites/ District Description of object Date of theft Action Taken Status
1. Himachal Pradesh , Himachal Pradesh Theft of Antique Bell In the intervening night 22-04-2015 FIR Lodged Not recovered
2. Karnataka Theft of one schist stone Yaksha sculpture from Bhimesheshwara temple at Neelgunda, Harappanahalli Taluk, Davangere district, Karnataka a centrally protected monument. schist stone Yaksha sculpture 26 April 2015 F.I.R. Lodged Not recovered
3. Orissa Theft of one sculpture of Trivikrama (Locally called Bali Vamana) from the premises of Varahanatha temple, Jajpur, Orrisa, a centrally protected monument. sculpture of Trivikrama (Locally called Bali 18 May 2015 F.I.R. Lodged Not recovered

4. Karnataka Bhoganandiswara temple at Nand, Chikkaballapur Talkuk Chikkaballapur District, Karanatak Black stone kalsa 16.sep, 2015 F.I.R
Lodged Not
recovered

5. Maharashtra Sculpture shed near Aam khas gate, Daulatabad Fort. District- Aurangabad. Sculpture shed 16,sep,2015 F.I.R
Lodged Not
Recovered
6. Odisha Chandrasekhar temple, kapilas a centrally protected monument. Theft of three sculptures of Bhairava, Ganesha ,kaumari. 25/26-11-2015 FIR Lodged Not recovered

YEAR 2016

S.No. State Name of Monument/ sites/ District Description of object Date of theft Action Taken Status

1. Rajasthan Ancient Ruins Kalyanpur, Disst, Udaipur Theft theft of three sculptures of standing figures of shiva and parvati , lakulish, again lakulish shiva 3/4- Feb-2016 FIR Lodged Not recovered

2. Chhattisgarh Jiya paa, District South Bastar Dantewada, Theft of Standing 1. Bhairav image. A loose sculpture theft from Bhairavbaba temple, Dantewada
2.Standing Bhairav image, A loose sculpture theft from, ruined temple, jiyapara. 6/7-july,2016 FIR Lodged Not recovered

Annexure − II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY PART TO (a) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1847 FOR 28.11.2016

Year Case No. and
Date of Registration Name of accused Allegation in Brief Name of the State/UT where crime occurred Present Status
1 2 3 4 5 6
2013 NIL

2014 PE 1/2014/CBI/EOU-V/EO-II New Delhi
Dt. 14.02.2014
The PE was related to illegal selling of Idol of Lord Tirthankar Parsvanatha of 11th century through online auction for the offences under IPC & IT Act. www.Saff ron Act. Com and other unknown persons. Illegal sale of ancient Jain Idol through auction on Internet by WWW.Saffron Art. Com website.
Delhi PE has been closed on 31.03.2014.
2015 RC 15/2015-EOU-V Dt. 29.10.2015 Unknown persons The case has been registered in pursuance of Hon'ble High Court of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla order dated 01.10.2015 in writ petition CWP No. 3660 of 2015, investigation of FIR No. 99/2010 of PS-West Boileauganj, Himachal Pradesh has been transferred to CBI. The case relates to theft of Antique Bell from the Indian Institute of Advanced study, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh. Under investigation
2016 (upto 31.10.2016) RC 19/2016-EOU-V Dt. 27.10.2016 Unknown persons The case has been registered, in pursuance of the directions of Hon'ble High Court of J&K, Srinagar dated 26.09.2016, passed in PIL No. 305/2008,titled Valley Citizen Counsel V/s State of J&K and others. The case relates to theft of Holy Quran which carries seal of the Emperor Aurangabad from PS Museum, Lal Mandi, Srinagar, J&K. J&K Under investigation